



Coastal California Gnatcatcher

Background on the San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Plan

The Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP), has been developed through an extraordinary collaboration among multiple government agencies and other jurisdictions. It was created as part of the State of California's Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP) program, which was designed as a solution to the conflict between continued urban growth in California and protection of its natural resources. The program's primary goal is the protection of coastal sage scrub, a rare habitat type, in a 6,000 square-mile area in five southern California counties--San Diego, Orange, Los Angeles, Riverside and San Bernardino.

The MSCP guides environmental protection and appropriate economic development over a 900-square mile area -- 581,600 acres. The plan will provide for the creation of an approximately 171,900-acre preserve system, which will conserve habitat and provide for the long-term biological needs of 85 rare plants and animals, including the threatened coastal California gnatcatcher and 19 other federally-listed species. Numerous other native plants and animals will also benefit from this plan.

Developing the MSCP involved working with dozens of private, public and nonprofit partners for five years. The plan becomes effective once the implementing agreements are signed by the state and federal wildlife agencies and local jurisdictions. It is the first of three such NCCPs that will be completed in San Diego County within an area that encompasses more than 1.3 million acres. Also underway is the Multiple Species Habitat Plan, covering northwestern San Diego County, and the Multiple Species and Open Space Plan, comprising on eastern San Diego County.

The MSCP covers the County of San Diego from the San Dieguito River Valley to Mexico and eastward from the Pacific Ocean to national forest lands. It provides for a preserve system which includes sensitive habitat types such as coastal sage scrub, southern maritime chaparral, and a mosaic of other natural vegetation communities. In addition, the plan provides certainty and predictability for land-use planners and landowners by providing a blueprint that defines areas appropriate for conservation and development.



*Multiple Species Conservation Planning -
Working Together to Conserve Our Natural Resources*